

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Translator's Foreword

All praises are due to Allah; may the prayers and peace of Allah be upon Muhammad, his family, his companions, and his followers. As to proceed:

This ebook is a translation from a portion of the book entitled, “Mutoon Usoolul Tafseer wal Tajweed wal Qira’aat.” This book is a guide for the student of knowledge in the path of memorization. We ask Allah, the Most High, to accept this deed only for His Face, and allow us to benefit from this reminder in this life and the next, Aameen.

Definition of Hifdh

Linguistic meaning of Hifdh:

al-Jawhar said in “al-Sihaah”:

“(Hifdh حفظ means) to preserve something by having it memorized,” meaning ‘to guard it.’ Memorizing something also means to know it by heart.

In the famous Arabic dictionary Lisaanul ‘Arab it says:

“Memorization (Hifdh): it is the opposite of forgetting. It is something retained with little neglectfulness.”

al-Jarjaani said in “at-Ta’reefaat”:

“Memorization (Hifdh) is being precisely aware of an issue.”

In the Arabic dictionary “al-Mu’jam al-Waseet” it says:

“Preservation: strongly preserving something from erroneous meanings entering into it, and retaining it by memory. It is also known as Dhaakirah (memory)”

(Tahaffudh) تحفظ: memorizing with full effort, care, and perfection.

Best Times to Memorize

The one who desires to memorize should know that there are certain times which are important to take advantage of. These times should be taken into account, and from these times are:

1. Early dawn before daybreak
2. The middle part of the day
3. The first part of the day instead of the last
4. Memorization at night and this is more suitable than memorizing during the day¹

However, these times vary from person to person. Perhaps the time that is appropriate for one is not appropriate for the other. Therefore, everyone should choose a time that is suitable for them.

¹ This could be understood by the verse in Surah al-Muzzamil: 6, “Indeed, the hours of the night are more effective for concurrence [of heart and tongue] and more suitable for words.”

Reasons That Will Aid One in Memorization

It is obligatory for the student to intend, while memorizing, to carry out this deed for only Allah's Face, the Most High. The student should also be sincere in clarifying matters to the Muslims.

From the helpful reasons that will aid one in memorizing are:

1. Sincerity

2. Abandoning sins

Muhammad bin an-Nadr said: I heard Yahya bin Yahya say, "A man asked Maalik ibn Anas:

'O Abu Abdillah, is there anything that will aid in memorizing something?'" Imaam Maalik said, "If you want aid in your memorization then abandon sins."

Bashar bin al-Haarith said: "If you want to perfect knowledge then do not disobey Allah"

'Ali bin Khushram said: I said to Wakee',

"O Abu Sufyaan, is there anything to learn regarding memorization?" He replied, "I see you are a newcomer." Then he said,

“Abandoning sins will aid in memorizing.”

And some of pious predecessors said it was attributed to ash-Shaafi’ee that he said,

شكوت الى وكيع سوء حفظي
فأرشدني الى ترك المعاصي
و أخبرني بأن العلم نور
و نور الله لا يهدي لعاصي

“I complained to Wakee’ about my bad memory,
So he guided me to abandon sins.
He informed me that knowledge is light,
And the light of Allah is not given to the sinner”

3. Being truthful and seeking Allah’s help in observing His limits

Allah the Most High said,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَتَصَرَّوْا ۖ اللَّهُ يَنْصُرْكُمْ
وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

“O you who believe! If you help (in the cause of)
Allâh, He will help you, and make your foothold
firm.”²

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

² Surah Muhammad: 7

“Therefore remember Me, I will remember you”³

وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ

“...and fulfill (your obligations to) My Covenant (with you) so that I fulfill (My Obligations to) your covenant (with Me)...”⁴

4. Perfecting what you already memorized

5. Watching what you eat and also eating less

6. Seriousness and diligence

Some have said:

**بقدر الكد تكتسب المعالي
و من طلب العلا سهر الليالي
تروم العلم ثم تنام ليلا
يغوص البحر من طلب اللالي**

**“Depending on the extent of exertion, you will attain the highest abode,
And whoever seeks the highest abode will have sleepless nights,
You desire knowledge, but you sleep through the night?
This is like diving into the sea searching for pearls.”⁵**

³ Surah Baqarah: 152

⁴ Surah Baqarah: 40

⁵ Meaning that this is a near impossible affair to achieve

Encouragement to Memorize

Ibn ‘Abdil Barr (may Allah have mercy on him) said in “Jaami’ bayaanil ‘ilm wa fadlihi”,

“Those who dislike writing down knowledge dislike it from one of two aspects:

The first: they did not want to mix the writing of that knowledge with the Qu’ran.

The second: they did not want to become reliant on writing and leave off memorizing. They feared that writing would replace memorization; then the memorizers would become few.”

al-Khalil (may Allah have mercy on him) said,

“Knowledge is not what is in a container.
Knowledge is nothing except what is confined in the
chest.”

And it is mentioned, with its chain (of narration), that Abu Ma’shir said regarding memorizing,

“O you who encompasses the pages,
What is related (by you) is comparable to what is in the
books,

Memorize otherwise you will be a blowing wind”⁶

‘Araabee said,

“A letter in your ‘Taamoor’ is better than ten letters in your book”

Abu ‘Umar said,

“Taamoor is the flesh of the heart.”

Abu ‘Umar narrated that Yunus bin Habib heard a man reciting some lines of poetry:

استودع العلم قرطاسا فضيعه
وبئس مستودع العلم القراطيس

“He stored knowledge in papers so he lost it,
And wretched is stored knowledge.”

So Yunus said, “May Allah curse him! There is nothing that is greater for conserving knowledge than memorization.”

Indeed, knowledge is from your soul and the owner (of your soul) is your body. Therefore, protect your knowledge by maintaining your soul and protect your soul by maintaining your body.

And it is attributed to Mansur al-Faqeeh that he said:

علمي معي حيثما يممت أحمله

⁶ Meaning all your time spent would be useless

بطني وعاء له لا بطن صندوق
ان كنت في البيت كان العلم فيه معي
أو كنت في السوق كان العلم في السوق

“My knowledge is with me,
And I carry it along wherever I go.
My inside is a vessel for it,
(It is) not inside (locked in) a chest.
If I am in the house then it is with me,
And if I am in the marketplace then it is with me.”

‘Abdur-Razzaaq said:

كل علم لا يدخل مع صاحبه الحمام, فلا تعده علما

“All knowledge that does not enter the bathroom with its
companion is not counted as knowledge”

Benefits of Memorizing

Memorizing has many benefits:

1. The different sciences of Islam remain in your head
2. It helps to attain additional knowledge
3. It formulates sciences in your mind making them smooth and easy to understand
4. The benefit of memorizing and its fruits are apparent if any of these situations were to occur:
 - a. If there are no books available
 - b. If there is no light available at night
 - c. If you were to be afflicted with blindness

Ways to Fortify Memorization

The path in fortifying knowledge is by abundant repeating, and people are different in this regard. There are those who strengthen what they memorize with little repeating, and there are those who do not memorize except after repeating numerous times. Therefore, it is necessary to return back to the text after memorizing it so that it may be strengthened. This is no different in regards to memorizing the Noble Qur'an.

Abu Musaa (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

تعاهدوا هذا القرآن فوالذي نفس محمد بيده لهو
أشد تفلاً من الإبل في عقلها

“Read the Qur'an regularly. By the One in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, it escapes from memory faster than a camel does from its tying ropes.”⁷

On the authority of ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said,

إنما مثل صاحب القرآن كمثّل الإبل المعقّلة، إن
عاهد عليها أمسكها، وإن أطلقها، ذهبت

⁷ Bukhari and Muslim

"The parable of one who knows the Qur'an by heart is as the parable of an owner of a hobbled camel. If he remains vigilant, he will retain it; and if he neglects it, it will go away."⁸

It was said, "The section of memorization should be small"

It was also said,

"Memorizing two letters is better than listening to heavy loads⁹, and understanding two letters is better than memorizing two lines."

⁸ Bukhari and Muslim

⁹ Heavy loads: a lot of material

Ruling of Memorizing

The ruling differs and depends on the subject that it is attached to. There are rulings which are connected to memorizing Qur'an, memorizing what is recited in prayer, preserving trusts, etc.

Memorizing a Text in Every Science

From the most beneficial thing for the student of knowledge is to:

Memorize a summarized text in every science

Imaam Nawawi said,

“And after memorizing the Qur’an, he should memorize from every summarized science and begin with the most important. From the most important sciences are: Fiqh, Nahwu (arabic grammar), Hadith and Usool, then the rest of whatever is made easy. After that he should keep busy with explanations of what he memorized...”

Ibn Jamaa’ah said,

“...then (the student) memorizes from every summarized science. He should combine between each of them, from Hadith and its sciences, Usool, Nahwu, and Sarf (etymology). However, all of these things should not busy him from studying the Qur’an and reading it regularly. It is required for him to return to the Qur’an every day.”

Reasons for Forgetfulness

Forgetfulness occurs for many reasons. From them are:

1. Disregard in performing the obligations set by Allah and transgressing His limits.

‘Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said,

اني لأحسب الرجل ينسى العلم كان يعلمه بالخطيئة يعمله

“Indeed I believe a man forgets the knowledge he used to have because of a sin he did.”

ad-Dhahaak bin Mazaahim said,

“There is no one who learns the Qur’an, then forgets it, except that it was a sin that he did. For this, Allah said,

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ
وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ

‘And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much.’¹⁰

And forgetting the Qur’an is from the greatest misfortunes.”

¹⁰ Surah Shuraa: 30

Sufyaan bin ‘Uyaynah was asked,
“Is knowledge taken from the slave because of a sin that befalls him?”

He replied, “Did you not hear Allah’s statement,

فَبِمَا نَقَضُوا مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً
يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا
ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ

‘So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They distort words from their [proper] usages and have forgotten a portion of that of which they were reminded?’”¹¹

2. Abundant eating

3. Fatigue and deficient sleep

4. Giving much importance to affairs in the worldly life, and being busy from reviewing what was memorized.

¹¹ Surah Ma'idah: 13